

## ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A preliminary ejection operation, which ejects ink not contributing to an image forming from ejection openings of the print head, is performed following the wiping of a face of the print head to remove residual ink from the print head face while minimizing the amount of ink ejected by the preliminary ejection. This avoids a degradation of an ink ejection performance of the print head and thereby ensures a high quality of printed image. For this purpose, in performing the preliminary ejection operation following the print head wiping operation, one preferred example changes the number of ink droplets to be ejected by the preliminary ejection operation according to a cumulative count of wiping operations.